

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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**2013 Kuskokwim River Salmon Fishery News Release 8
Kuskokwim River Subdistrict 1-B to open for Commercial Salmon Fishing**

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at Bethel for commercial salmon fishermen in the Kuskokwim Area.

Subdistrict 1-B

The Upper Section of Subdistrict 1-B will open to commercial salmon fishing for 6 hours from 12:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 16, 2013. This area is defined as that portion of District 1 downstream of regulatory markers located at Bethel to ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately 15 miles downstream of Johnson River.

The Lower Section of Subdistrict 1-B will open to commercial salmon fishing for 8 hours from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 16, 2013. This area is defined as that portion of District 1 from a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately 15 miles downstream of the Johnson River to the lower boundary of District 1, defined as a line from Apokak Slough to the southernmost tip of Eek Island to Popokamiut.

Coastal Village Seafoods has agreed to not purchase king salmon during this commercial period. Commercial fisherman can release live king salmon or retain them for subsistence purposes. King salmon caught, but not sold must be reported on fish tickets.

The hours for subsistence closures adjacent to periods of commercial fishing on the Kuskokwim River are 6 hours before, during, and 3 hours after commercial fishing. The area closed to subsistence fishing includes the Subdistrict open to commercial fishing and a buffer area of the adjacent Subdistrict. **Therefore, from 6:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 16, subsistence salmon fishing in the Kuskokwim River will be closed from the upper end of Straight Slough downstream to the mouth,** defined by a line from Apokak Slough to the southern-most tip of Eek Island to Popokamiut.

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group met on Monday, July 15, to hear subsistence salmon fishing reports and discuss salmon run assessment projects. Overall, subsistence fishing for king, sockeye, and chum salmon in the lower river has come to an end. Many subsistence fishermen in the upper river continue to target chum and sockeye salmon. Escapements of king salmon at weir projects are low. Escapements of chum and sockeye salmon are near average. Based on Bethel Test Fishery catches the majority of king and sockeye salmon runs are through the lower river. The Department recommended opening a commercial fishing period in Subdistrict 1-B for 6 hours on Tuesday, July 16, with a two hour extension in the Lower Section of Subdistrict 1-B. The Working Group voted to accept the Department's recommendation.

At this time there has not been any interest from buyers to purchase commercially harvested salmon in Subdistrict 1-A. Therefore, future Kuskokwim River commercial fishing periods are anticipated to occur in Subdistrict 1-B.

The Department will be closely monitoring commercial fishing periods to assess fishery performance and anticipates announcing additional commercial fishing periods as warranted. Further announcements will be made from the Bethel Fish and Game office, on the state web site (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>), and local radio stations. News releases will be faxed to area villages and local fish processing companies.

Commercial fishermen are encouraged to consult Fish and Game regulations prior to beginning commercial fishing operations.

For additional information or questions regarding Districts 1 and Kuskokwim Area fisheries, contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office in the Bethel at 543-2433 or toll free at 855-933-2433.

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